

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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UNCLAS PARIS 09915

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLAB, FR

SUBJECT: CGT LEADER VISITS UAW'S WOODCOCK

1. A CHANCE ENCOUNTER WITH JEAN BRETEAU, SECRETARY GENERAL OF CGT'S METAL WORKERS FEDERATION, PRODUCED FOLLOWING INFORMATION CONCERNING HIS VISIT TO THE U.S. EARLY MARCH:

(A) CEREMONIAL REASON FOR VISIT WAS TO PARTICIPATE IN RECEPTION GIVEN UPON RETIREMENT OF DE MAYEAU (PHONETIC SINCE WE CANNOT FIND HIS NAME IN DIRECTORY) WHO RETIRED AS VICE PRESIDENT OF ELECTRICAL, RADIO AND MACHINE WORKERS OF AMERICA AND ACCEPTED AN ASSIGNMENT AS WFTU REPRESENTATIVE IN UNITED NATIONS.

(B) REAL PURPOSE WAS TO VISIT U.S. FOR THE FIRST TIME AND TO MEET WITH UAW PRESIDENT WOODCOCK.

(C) HOSPITALITY AND DYNAMISM OF AMERICAN PEOPLE, SENSE OF POWER AND DRIVE DESPITE ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, UNCLASSIFIED

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IMPRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE AND BEAUTY OF THE COUNTRY ARE

SOME OF THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF AMERICA THAT ATTRACTED THIS HARD-NOSED AND VERY SHREWD CGT LABOR LEADER. ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE, HE WAS TAKEN ABACK BY THE LOW LEVEL OF POLITICAL SOPHISTICATION OF AMERICAN PEOPLE INCLUDING TRADE UNIONISTS, EVEN THOSE KNOWN OR SELF-PROCLAIMED AS RADICALS (PROGRESSISTS). THE OTHER NEGATIVE ASPECT WAS GENERAL FEELING OF INSECURITY IN THE STREETS AFTER DARK AND THE HIGH VISIBILITY OF ARMED POLICEMEN.

(D) HE MET WOODCOCK IN HIS UAW OFFICE IN DETROIT AND CAME AWAY PLEASED WITH THE CONVERSATION HE HAD WITH HIM. THE MAIN SUBSTANTIVE QUESTION DISCUSSED WAS BRETEAU'S IDEA OF HOLDING A WORLD-WIDE TRADE UNION CONFERENCE OF AUTOMOBILE WORKERS. WOODCOCK DID NOT REJECT IDEA OFFHAND BUT RESERVED FINAL REPLY ON IMF (INTERNATIONAL METAL WORKERS FEDERATION) DECISION ON THE ISSUE. BRETEAU TOLD WOODCOCK THAT HIS IDEA HAS BEEN ACCEPTED BY BRITISH TUC WHICH UNDERTOOK TO SUBMIT IT TO THE IMF FOR CONSIDERATION.
STONE

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